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SECTIONALISM IN PENNSYLVANIA DURING THE REVOLUTION

THE colonization of America may in a sense be regarded as a practical manifestation of that discontentment with economic, political and religious conditions which prevailed among so large a number of thinking people in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Those who were the most discontented were the first to emigrate. Before the close of the seventeenth century a fringe of English settlements was established along the Atlantic seaboard, from Massachusetts to South Carolina, by people whose interests and ideals were already antagonistic to those held by the ruling classes in the mother country. A struggle began at the very outset, therefore, which lasted throughout the colonial period and culminated in the Revolution. During the course of this conflict the stream of immigration was uninterrupted. In some of the colonies, especially in New England, where the newcomers were mostly of English blood, there was rapid assimilation. In others the newer elements pushed back into the interior and came to constitute separate groups of people, who often differed in race and religion from the original founders along the coast. The relations between these new groups and the coast people were very similar to those which existed between the latter and the mother country. The frontier was either governed entirely in the interest of the low country or was denied any adequate government at all. The result was a bitter sectional controversy, which now and then manifested itself in such spectacular episodes as the Regulator uprising in North Carolina, and the raid of the Paxton boys in Pennsylvania.¹

The conflict was especially bitter in Pennsylvania because the

¹ See F. J. Turner, in *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1893, pp. 197-227; J. S. Bassett, *ibid.*, 1894, pp. 141-212; W. A. Schaper, *ibid.*, 1900, vol. i, pp. 237-463, especially pp. 245-252; C. H. Lincoln, *The Revolutionary Movement in Pennsylvania, 1760-1776*, *passim*.

points of view of the East and West were so radically different. At the beginning of the Revolution, English and Welsh Quakers controlled the city of Philadelphia and the three original southeastern counties of Philadelphia, Chester and Bucks.¹ In adhering to their ideals of self-government, religious toleration and opposition to war they had already come into conflict with the proprietary interests in England and with the western settlers in the province itself. The first considerable non-Quaker element to arrive was the Germans. Their earliest settlement was made at Germantown in 1683,² but later they advanced up the valleys of the Schuylkill and the Lehigh and westward to the Susquehanna, leaving an extensive neutral area about the city of Philadelphia. They outnumbered the Quakers as early as 1750, and by 1776 their influence was predominant in the present counties of Northampton, Lehigh, Berks, Schuylkill, Lebanon and Lancaster. Differing from the original settlers in race, language and religion, they ought, according to the ordinarily accepted rules of political science, to have constituted a serious element of danger. That they did not was partly because they had had no experience in practical politics in their own country and partly because the policy of the Quakers was on the whole popular. They were not loath to escape military service and they were glad of the opportunity to worship God in their own peculiar way. Some of their sects, the Mennonites, Schwenkfelders and Tunkers, for example, were as conscientiously opposed to war as the Quakers themselves. The attack upon the proprietors met their approval, not so much because of the fundamental principles of government involved as because it promised a means of avoiding the payment of quit rents. For these reasons they developed no politicians of their own but followed blindly the leadership of the Quakers. As President Sharpless says: "There could be

¹ A few Irish Quakers had also settled in this region, but they had been gradually assimilated by the English and the Welsh. See A. C. Myers, *Immigration of the Irish Quakers into Pennsylvania, 1682-1750*.

² The Germantown settlers are usually called Quakers, and in fact they very soon became associated with that society although it is generally believed that, at the time of their arrival, they were Mennonites.

seen not infrequently the spectacle of a community of Germans solidly voting for one of a handful of Quakers in their midst."¹

In the course of time this Quaker-German supremacy was threatened by the intrusion of other elements that were entirely out of sympathy with their ideals. In the city of Philadelphia there developed two distinct aristocratic social groups, one composed of the Church of England families, the other of wealthy Quakers. When the sons of William Penn became Anglicans,² the chief appointive offices were given to churchmen, although the Quakers were still able to control the elective assembly. The Quakers appealed to the Germans for support, the Anglicans made a similar appeal to the Scotch-Irish. This newer group of immigrants came for the most part by way of Philadelphia; some of them remained in the city, others established scattering settlements in Philadelphia, Bucks and Berks, still others took possession of the southern and western townships of Chester and Lancaster,³ but the great majority pushed on beyond the existing frontier. Pennsborough and Hopewell townships in the Cumberland valley were founded in 1735; the triangle which includes the present counties of Perry, Cumberland, York, Adams and Franklin was settled between 1735 and 1760; and after the peace of 1763 the entire southwestern section of the province was occupied. These people were strict Presbyterians; but while they had no love for the churchmen of the East, and no very high regard for the interests of the Penn family, they were led into a temporary alliance with them through a common dislike of the Quakers. Support was also received from a third discontented faction, made up of non-Quaker mechanics, small shop-keepers and day-laborers in the city of Philadelphia. In one form or another the struggle dates back to the early part of the eighteenth century, but the various elements were not organized into distinct political groups until about 1755. Then for nearly twenty years the Quaker-German

¹ Isaac Sharpless, *A History of Quaker Government in Pennsylvania*, vol. ii, p. 6.

² See W. R. Shepherd, *A History of Proprietary Government in Pennsylvania*, p. 216.

³ See the excellent maps prepared by Mr. A. C. Myers and Professor M. D. Learned for the Pennsylvania exhibit at the Jamestown Exposition.

Anti-Proprietary party was arrayed against the Anglican-Scotch-Irish Proprietary coalition. The Proprietary leaders, John Dickinson, William Chew, Richard Peters, the Reverend William Smith and others, were men of conservative instincts, although in that respect they represented only the small eastern wing of the party. They supported the government of the proprietors because they believed that it was preferable to government by the crown; the Scotch-Irish, on the other hand, supported it as a means of lessening the influence of the Quaker oligarchy. The Anti-Proprietary leaders were Benjamin Franklin and Joseph Galloway.

Although the Quakers were in a minority even in their own party, they were able, by preserving a high suffrage qualification in the city of Philadelphia, by keeping down the representation of Philadelphia and the West in the Assembly and by retaining the confidence of the Germans, to dominate the policy of the province until the Revolution. In addition to the usual age and residence qualifications, Markham's Frame of Government in 1696 required electors to "have fifty acres of land, ten acres whereof being seated and cleared, or be otherwise worth fifty pounds, lawful money of this government, clear estate."¹ These provisions were repeated in substance in the acts of 1700, 1706 and 1766, and remained in force until the Revolution.² Fifty pounds in personal property was at that time a comfortable fortune, but land was abundant and cheap; consequently the lower classes in Philadelphia were disfranchised while the suffrage in the country was fairly democratic. According to an estimate made by Mr. McKinley, which is based upon a study of tax lists, one person in ten was a qualified voter in the counties and only one in fifty in the city; in other words, about one-half of the total number of adult males in the country were qualified and about one-tenth in the city.³ In spite of these restrictions

¹ B. P. Poore, *The Federal and State Constitutions, Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the United States*, 2d ed., vol. ii, p. 1533.

² J. T. Mitchell and Henry Flanders, *The Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania*, from 1682 to 1801, vol. ii, pp. 25, 213; vol. vii, p. 35.

³ A. E. McKinley, *The Suffrage Franchise in the Thirteen English Colonies in America*, pp. 279-283. See also Lincoln, *Revolutionary Movement*, pp. 77-80, and a letter signed by "Consideration" in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 30, 1776.

the Quakers may have felt that their hold upon the city was rather precarious, for they kept its representation in the Assembly at a figure far below that to which it was justly entitled under a system based upon population, upon the number of tax-payers or upon the amount of wealth. For example, if Philadelphia county be taken as a standard, the city in 1760 had two votes less than its quota according to the number of taxables and five less according to the amount of taxes paid.¹ It might, however, be argued that the discrepancy did not exist when the original apportionment (two members for the city and eight for each of the three old counties) was made in 1706,² and it would have been very difficult to make a change later without considering the claims of the West. In fact it was partly this community of interest between Philadelphia and the West which enabled the Anglican leaders to form a coalition with the Scotch-Irish. It became the definite policy of the Quakers to delay the organization of new counties and to keep down their representation after they were organized. The first additions to the original three counties were Lancaster in 1729, with four members, York and Cumberland in 1749 and 1750, with two members each, and Berks and Northampton in 1752, with one member each.³ Then for nearly twenty years no further action was taken, although the need of a more efficient local administration in the West urgently demanded the creation of new counties. The organization of Bedford (1771), Northumberland (1772) and Westmoreland (1773) and the granting of additional members to Berks (1771) and to Northampton (1774) increased by five the representation of the frontier,⁴ but even then the southeastern section had twenty-six votes in the assembly to fifteen for the remainder of the province, and Philadelphia, Chester and Bucks had a safe majority without counting the two representatives from the city at all. It was not

¹ Lincoln, *Revolutionary Movement*, pp. 40-52.

² *Statutes at Large*, vol. ii, p. 213.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. iv, pp. 131-134; vol. v, pp. 70-77, 87-94, 133-140, 140-147.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. viii, pp. 9, 10, 46-54, 143-152, 314-322, 398, 399. Mr. Lincoln errs in giving February 1, 1770, as the date upon which Berks and Northampton were allowed additional members. *Revolutionary Movement*, p. 51.

until March 23, 1776, after the real control of affairs had already begun to pass into the hands of extra-legal committees and conventions, that a general electoral reform bill was finally enacted ;¹ and although that measure granted thirteen additional assemblymen to the frontier counties and four to the city of Philadelphia, the change was not as great as might appear, because the Quakers still controlled thirty² votes while the German and Scotch-Irish counties had only twenty-eight.

During the early period of the controversy with Great Britain one party looked to the proprietors for relief and the other looked to the king, but both were agreed in opposing the claims of Parliament. The work of the Stamp Act Congress, the denunciation of the Townshend measures and the views expressed by Dickinson in the *Farmer's Letters* met with general approval. When, however, the interests of king, Parliament and proprietors became merged, the sentiment of unanimity disappeared. At the time of the meeting of the First Continental Congress, it is possible to distinguish three fairly well defined political groups. The Quakers, the Germans of the non-fighting sects and a few of the Episcopalians had foresight enough to see that the politicians of New England and the South would bring on a war of rebellion unless they were checked by the more conservative people of the Middle colonies. They were, therefore, inclined to make complete submission and trust to the generosity of the home government for considerate treatment. Their recognized leader was Joseph Galloway. Then there was a second group, composed of Episcopalians, a few of the Quakers and a considerable number of well-to-do Presbyterians and Germans, who were also dissatisfied with the radicalism of the other colonies, but who were determined to remain in the movement and if possible keep it within moderate bounds. Among their leading men may be mentioned John Dickinson, Robert Morris, James Wilson, Charles Thomson, Joseph Reed and Thomas Mifflin. Finally, there was a radical faction, which in-

¹ Statutes at Large, vol. viii, pp. 459-462.

² This includes the city, which seems fair enough, inasmuch as the middle and lower classes were still disfranchised. See Lincoln, *Revolutionary Movement*, p. 240.

cluded the bulk of the Presbyterians, a few Germans and the mechanics in the city of Philadelphia. Until the spring of 1776 they followed the moderate leaders, but their views were really best represented by Thomas Paine, George Bryan and Daniel Roberdeau.

Owing to the fact that Philadelphia was the seat of government of the confederation, Pennsylvania was more subject to the influence of Congress than any other colony. "Since my first arrival in this city," writes Elbridge Gerry to James Warren, June 25, 1776, "the New England delegates have been in a continual war with the advocates of proprietary interests in Congress and this colony."¹ The agitation of the Adamses and others in favor of the immediate adoption of a declaration of independence and the formation of state constitutions resulted in a new alignment of political parties. The conservatives and a majority of the moderates, represented by Dickinson, Morris and Wilson, were strongly opposed to both measures. They believed that their charter, like those of Connecticut and Rhode Island, could be revised to meet the new conditions, and that the Assembly was the only body which was legally qualified to make the necessary revision. The New England program, on the other hand, was approved by the radicals and by a section of the moderates led by Benjamin Franklin, Thomas McKean, John Bayard and Dr. Rush. On May 20 a large mass-meeting was held in the State House grounds to protest against the right of the Assembly to undertake the alteration of the government, and to demand the election of a constitutional convention without regard to the old restrictions on the suffrage.² The details of the plan were worked out by a provincial conference of committees made up of representatives from the various county committees of inspection, which met in Philadelphia from June 18 to June 25.³ Inasmuch as these local committees were composed exclusively of Whigs,

¹ J. T. Austin, *Life of Elbridge Gerry*, vol. i, p. 194. See also C. F. Adams, *Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. i, p. 219; vol. iii, p. 25; vol. x, p. 63.

² *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, May 21, 1776; *The Gazette*, May 22, 1776; Extracts from the Diary of Christopher Marshall, ed. of 1877, p. 72.

³ *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, vol. iii, pp. 633-665.

the radicals were in a large majority, controlling every delegation except that of Philadelphia county. A formal call was issued for a convention to meet in Philadelphia on July 15, and the suffrage qualifications were defined. There were to be two classes of voters: first, all associators, or militiamen, twenty-one years of age, who had resided in the province for one year immediately preceding the election and had been assessed for provincial or county taxes; secondly, all those qualified to vote under the old laws, who would, when required, take an oath or make affirmation renouncing allegiance to George III and binding themselves not to oppose the measures of Congress or the efforts of the approaching convention to establish a free government.¹ The extension of the suffrage to associators and the adoption of these tests would alone have been sufficient to give the radicals control of the convention, but to remove all possible doubt the conference further resolved "that Eight Representatives be sent by the City of Philadelphia, and Eight by each county in the Province to the Convention."² In other words, the frontier, which had been inadequately represented under the old régime, was now given an advantage over the more populous communities in the East.

The Convention met promptly on the day appointed, and a committee consisting of three delegates from the original counties, four from the city and ten from the frontier was named to draft a frame of government. Most of the work apparently was done by James Cannon and Timothy Matlack, with the assistance of three other men who were not on the committee or even delegates to the Convention itself, namely, George Bryan, Thomas Paine and Dr. James Young.³ The result of their labor was a constitution establishing a legislature of one house, a supreme executive council and a judiciary which was entirely dependent upon the legislature. The principle of rotation in office was adopted. A president and a vice-president of the Executive Council were to be elected annually by a joint vote

¹ Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series, vol. iii p., 640.

² *Ibid.*, p. 643.

³ See "Consideration" in *The Gazette*, October 30, 1776; Adams, *Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. ix, p. 623; Alexander Graydon, *Memoirs of His Own Time*, pp. 285, 286; B. A. Konkle, *The Life and Times of Thomas Smith*. pp. 76-78.

of the Council and the Assembly, but their authority was no greater than that of the other members. Provision was also made for a Council of Censors, composed of two members from the city and two each from the counties, to meet every seven years to inquire whether the constitution had been preserved inviolate and to decide whether a convention should be called to consider amendments.¹

Most of the writers who deal with the period follow blindly the conservative Eastern sources and exaggerate the defects of this constitution without due regard to the difficulties under which it was framed. They do not seem to consider that the Revolution was a social as well as a political movement. Whatever may have been the theory, not one of the thirteen colonies in 1775 was really a democracy. The exercise of political power was the special privilege of the well-born, of the commercial and planting aristocracy of the sea-coast region. In some of the colonies a majority of this class was opposed to the Revolution altogether, so that the few who favored a political separation from England were compelled to rely upon the pioneer democracy of the frontier and the proletariat of their own section. The troubles in Pennsylvania were due to the fact that this moderate revolutionary element was not numerous enough to control its radical allies. The constitution of 1776 was essentially a democratic document, and it was unpopular with the aristocracy mainly for that reason rather than because of any defects in the form of government which it established. So long as the old ruling class was in power no objection was ever made to a unicameral legislature; the check and balance idea was now taken up only as a means of obstructing the progress of democracy, or, to put it in another form, as a means of protecting the few against the tyranny of the many.

The publication of the constitution was followed by a storm of disapproval throughout the eastern part of the state. It was criticised in *The Packet* by "K," "W," "Z.," "Lucius", "Camillus" and "Christophilus Scotus", in *The Journal* by "Brutus" and "Phocion", and in *The Evening Post* by "A Follower of

¹ Poore, *Federal and State Constitutions*, vol. ii, pp. 1540-1548.

Christ" and "Hampden"; and was condemned *in toto* in a series of resolutions adopted at a large mass-meeting held in the State House yard October 21 and 22. Replies to these attacks were made by "Consideration", "John Trusshoop" and "Considerate Freeman" in *The Gazette*, by "Cincinnatus", "Demophilus", "A Real Friend to the Christian Religion", "Common Sense" and "De Wit" in *The Packet*, by "Cassius" in *The Evening Post* and by "A Friend to Truth and the People" in *The Journal*.¹ From the issue which was thus presented the two factions came to be known as Constitutionalists and Anti-Constitutionalists. But after all the constitution was merely the pretext and not the cause of political dissension. The Constitutionalist party was composed of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians of the West, most of the Lutherans and Reformed Germans, a few eastern Presbyterians, a few "Fighting Quakers" and the middle and lower classes in the city of Philadelphia; the Anti-Constitutionalists, of the Quakers, the Anglicans, the Germans who belonged to the non-fighting sects and the commercial interests in the city. In other words, there was simply a continuation of the old struggle between the East and the West, between the aristocracy and the democracy, between the Quakers and the Scotch-Irish, the only difference being that it was more distinctly sectional in character. Cordial relations were gradually established between the Episcopalians and the Quakers of the East and between the Scotch-Irish and the Germans of the West. The disfranchisement of the Quakers by the test acts and the unwillingness of the Germans to take an active part in politics threw the leadership of the two parties into the hands of the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, so that for a time there was a renewal on a small scale of the historical conflict between the Anglican and the Calvinist. Frequent complaints were made that the Presbyterians, who numbered barely one-

¹ *The Packet*, September 24, October 15, 22, 29, 1776, March 18, 1777; *The Journal*, October 9, 1776, March 12, 1777; *The Evening Post*, September 26, October 8, 22, 1776, March 13, 1777; *The Gazette*, October 23, 30, November 13, 20, 1776. See also the diary of James Allen, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. ix, pp. 188, 189, and Konkle, *Life and Times of Thomas Smith*, chaps. vi and vii.

fourth of the population, should monopolize most of the public offices. According to "Liberty of Conscience", they held in 1785 over fifty of the seventy-four seats in the Assembly, three of the four supreme court judgeships, the attorney-generalship, the comptroller-generalship, the speakership of the Assembly, the clerkship of the Assembly and several minor offices.¹ The most prominent Constitutionalist leaders from 1776 to 1790, George Bryan, General Joseph Reed, Colonel John Bayard and the Reverend John Ewing of Philadelphia, Robert Whitehill of Cumberland county, William Findley of Westmoreland, and John Smilie of Lancaster, Westmoreland, and Fayette, were all Presbyterians, and their party was popularly known as the Presbyterian party. In *The Gazette* for February 2, 1785, "Catholic" tells the story of a new member of the Assembly who put up his horse at a tavern and then inquired where Bryan lived, informing his host "that his congregation had put him into the Assembly and had ordered him, as he was a new hand and did not understand politics, to go to Mr. Bryan and ask his directions how to vote." Throughout the entire period from 1776 to 1790 Bryan was the most influential leader of the party, although during the earlier years the old traditions of family rule made it necessary for him to give way to men of less ability but more aristocratic birth, such as Thomas Wharton, Junior, Joseph Reed and John Bayard. The "Fighting Quaker" or "Free Quaker" element was represented by Timothy Matlack, Christopher Marshall, Owen Biddle and Dr. James Hutchinson. The Anti-Constitutionalist leaders, on the other hand, were predominantly Episcopalian, as, for example, Robert Morris, James Wilson, Thomas Smith and the Reverend William Smith. John Dickinson and Thomas Mifflin had been associated with the Quakers, and the Mühlenberg brothers were German Lutherans.

The political differences were also based upon conflicting economic interests. The West was exclusively an agricultural section, whereas the Southeast was dominated by the mercantile and financial classes of the city of Philadelphia. If the trans-

¹ *The Gazette*, January 26, 1785.

portation facilities had been good, this would not in itself have constituted a serious obstacle to union, but, unfortunately, the roads were few in number and badly built and the river navigation was obstructed by innumerable shoals and rapids. At the beginning of the Revolution there was a wagon road from Reading to Philadelphia, and two roads from the Susquehanna to the Upper Schuylkill, one running from Fort Augusta (Sunbury) to Hughes's saw-mill, about thirty miles above Reading, and the other from a point just below Fort Augusta direct to Reading itself.¹ In the lower Susquehanna valley the chief thoroughfare to Philadelphia was the king's highway through York and Lancaster. South of this were the great Conestoga road, which ran into the king's highway near Downingtown, and the Newcastle and Conestoga whiskey road, which intersected the Nottingham and New Garden road near Elk creek just north of the Maryland line and thus afforded communication with Philadelphia by way of Kennett (Square) and Chester. From Harris's Ferry (Harrisburg) there was a road to Reading, another to Lancaster and a third—the Paxton road—which passed through Ephrata and joined the main York-Lancaster highway at Edward Kennison's plantation in Whiteland township, Chester county.² Before the close of the colonial period two plans had already been suggested for an all-water route between Philadelphia and the Susquehanna: one from Philadelphia to Reading by way of the Schuylkill, from Reading to Myer's Town by way of Tulpehocken Creek, from Myer's Town to Lebanon by way of a lock canal and from Lebanon to Middletown by way of the Quittapahilla and Swatara Creeks; the other by way of a canal between the headwaters of Delaware Bay and the Chesapeake. William Penn may have had the former route in mind when he stated in 1690 that a settlement

¹ Statutes at Large, vol. viii, pp. 56-58; Pennsylvania Archives, First Series (Hazard), vol. iv, pp. 362, 363; Colonial Records, vol. ix, p. 651.

² Colonial Records, vol. iii, pp. 419, 420, vol. iv, pp. 182-185; Maps of Nicholas Scull (1759), William Scull (1770), Reading Howell (1792), and others in Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, Appendix i-x; H. F. Eshleman, Map of the Earliest Highways Leading from the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers to the Susquehanna River and its Branches (Lancaster, 1907).

which he proposed to establish on the Susquehanna could be connected with the east "by water, by the benefit of the river Schoukill; for a *Branch* of that river lies near a *Branch* that runs into the Susquehannagh River and is the *Common Course* of the *Indians* with their *Skins* and *Furrs* into our Parts."¹ This route was surveyed in 1762 by David Rittenhouse and in 1769-1770 by a committee of the American Philosophical Society, composed of Dr. William Smith, John Lukens and John Sellers. Through the efforts of Thomas Gilpin the American Philosophical Society was also induced in 1769 and 1770 to appoint similar committees to explore the other route.² The merchants of Philadelphia manifested no special interest in either scheme, however, and when the war came on they were forgotten. The Union canal was not finally completed and thrown open to traffic until 1828 and the Chesapeake and Delaware not until 1829.

The counties of Philadelphia, Bucks, Berks and Northampton and the eastern and northern parts of Chester and Lancaster were economically dependent upon the city of Philadelphia. The Berks, Northampton and upper Bucks settlers floated their heavy produce down the Lehigh, the Delaware and the Schuylkill on rafts during the spring freshets and sent back their return cargoes by wagon. In the Susquehanna valley, on the other hand, from the northernmost settlements down to the Maryland line, the bulk of the produce was marketed in Baltimore.³ Owing to the difficult character of the ascending navigation, however, the north and west branch settlers and some of those in the main valley above the Conewago falls were in the habit of selling for cash and purchasing their return merchandise in

¹ Hazard, Register of Pennsylvania, vol. i, p. 400. Mr. Eshleman thinks that Penn's words refer to a route further south by way of French and Conestoga Creeks.

² *Ibid.*, 409; Tanner, Canals and Railroads of the United States, p. 95; Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, 2nd ed., vol. i, pp. 357-364; J. Gilpin, A Memoir on . . . the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal (Washington, 1821), pp. 3, 4; William Smith, Historical Account of . . . Canal Navigation in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, 1795), p. 67.

³ The produce was floated down the river on rafts to the Conewago falls and was then transported by wagon either to tide-water for reshipment or directly to Baltimore itself.

Philadelphia. Nearer the Maryland border the trade was kept up in both directions. In a memorandum of 1770, entitled "Some brief Observations offered to the intended meeting,¹ to consider of the Best mode of saving the trade of this province, which is going from its metropolis to Baltimore," Thomas Gilpin states that "the country most in danger is the south part of Cumberland, York and Chester counties;"² to which he might also have added the southern half of Lancaster. "In the former very imperfect and obstructed state of its navigation," says an anonymous pamphleteer of 1796, "much of the produce of Pennsylvania passed down this river on its way to the Baltimore market."³ About 1829 another writer asserted that the trade of the Susquehanna, "composing the whole of the produce of the north and west of our state, has been enjoyed by Baltimore, from the foundation of that city, or say for fifty or sixty years."⁴

From the point of view of politics, this trade rivalry between Philadelphia and Baltimore was an important factor in the development of sectionalism. A correspondent of *The Independent Gazetteer*⁵ wrote:

Happy would it be for Pennsylvania if her boundaries were comprised by the Susquehanna; we should be more compact and more united. The back counties are a dead weight upon us; they pay very little towards the support of government; and some of their members are, from mere local prejudices and narrow sentiments, continually thwarting every measure proposed for the public good, so that their own particular ends are answered.

More to the point is the complaint of "A Friend to the Prosperity of both Sides of the Susquehanna":

¹ Probably a joint committee of merchants and representatives of the American Philosophical Society.

² Gilpin, Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, p. 11, Appendix.

³ A Description of the River Susquehanna, Philadelphia, 1796, p. 40.

⁴ Clipping, probably from *The Aurora*, in the Matthew Carey collection of newspaper clippings (Ridgway Branch of the Philadelphia Library Company), series entitled Select Scraps, vol. iii, p. 15. See also *ibid.*, vol. xxii, pp. 147, 148.

⁵ March 12, 1787.

But it unfortunately happens that the trade and commerce of Pennsylvania is cut in two divisions. One part comes to Philadelphia and the other to Baltimore. Were not this the case, there would be no opposition about a Bank, but what arose from the narrow motives of party spirit, in which men will often oppose a general good, because they were not the persons who did it.¹

Thomas Paine gives the same testimony :

The commerce and traffic of the Back Country members and the parts they represent goes to Baltimore. From thence are their imports purchased, and thence do their exports go. They come here to legislate and go there to trade. . . . What advantage persons thus situated can propose to themselves from a destruction of the bank at Philadelphia is not easy to perceive. . . . If one part of the state is thus to go on in opposing the other, no great good can come to either.²

Another factor in the development of sectionalism was the unequal distribution of the financial burdens of the state. The *per capita* rate of taxation was higher in the East than it was in the West, not only because the East was more wealthy and because it contained a greater number of non-associators, who had to pay double, but also because it contributed a much larger proportion of its actual assessment. In 1779 there were 37,887 taxables in the city of Philadelphia and the six counties east of the Susquehanna river—Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester, Lancaster, Berks and Northampton—and 16,796 in the six counties west of the river—York, Cumberland, Bedford, Northumberland,³ Westmoreland and Washington. During the five fiscal years from March 20, 1778, to March 20, 1783, the city and the eastern counties paid 96+ per cent of their quotas of the taxes assessed in continental currency, 78— per cent of their quotas of the taxes assessed in state currency, and 45— per cent of the taxes assessed in specie. The corresponding figures for the western counties were 48+, 17— and 9—. Of the total amount actually paid into the treasury the city and the

¹ *The Gazette*, November 29, 1786.

² *Ibid.*, March 7, 1787, over the signature "Common Sense."

³ Classed with the western division because the greater part of its territory lay on that side of the main (north) branch of the river.

eastern counties contributed 86+ per cent of the continental currency, 94— of the state currency, and 94+ of the specie. In other words, the East contributed more than ninety per cent of all the taxes and the city of Philadelphia and the three original Quaker counties alone more than sixty per cent.¹

If they constituted so small a minority of the population of the state and possessed so small a share of its wealth, how, it may be asked, were the people of the West able to maintain their political supremacy? The answer is simple. They merely resorted to the old familiar Quaker weapons, inequality of representation and restrictions upon the suffrage. To the city and to each of the counties were allotted six assemblymen, without regard to population, until 1779, when an apportionment was to be made based upon the number of taxables. Equal county representation in the supreme Executive Council and in the Council of Censors was established as a permanent principle. In the matter of suffrage, the constitution provided that every freeman twenty-one years of age who had resided in the state for one year before the day of election and had paid taxes during that time could qualify as an elector. The liberality of this provision was, however, subsequently neutralized through the passage of a series of legislative test acts. By the acts of June 13, 1777, and April 1, 1778, all white male inhabitants of the state above the age of eighteen were required, under penalty of disfranchisement and exclusion from office, in addition to other disabilities, to take an oath (or make affirmation) renouncing allegiance to George III, acknowledging allegiance to the state of Pennsylvania, and promising that they would not do anything prejudicial or injurious to the freedom and independence of the United States, as declared by Congress.² The act of October 1, 1779, provided that all of those who had not already qualified, and who would not, within a definite period, varying in the different counties from twenty to sixty days, take an ironclad oath (or affirmation) that they had not since the adoption of the

¹ Minutes of the First Session of the Ninth General Assembly, pp. 49, 50, 71, 72. Pennsylvania Archives, Fourth Series, vol. iii, pp. 1002, 1003; "Examiner" in *The Independent Gazetteer*, January 22, 1785.

² Statutes at Large, vol. ix, pp. 110-114, 238-245.

Declaration of Independence "directly or indirectly aided, assisted or abetted or in any way countenanced the King of Great Britain, his generals, fleets or armies or their adherents in their claims upon these United States" should be forever excluded from the exercise of political privileges.¹ In other words, it provided a test which was not only *ex post facto*, but which could not be taken at all after a specified date. According to the estimates of "Constitutionalist"² and "De Witt",³ only one-fifth or at most one-fourth of the adult male inhabitants were able and willing to comply with these requirements. Cato's figures are more exact. The population of the state in 1785 was 350,000. On the assumption that the average family consisted of six members, he gives the number of adult males as 60,000, of whom 18,000 were jurors and 42,000 were non-jurors.⁴ In parts of the southeastern counties there were not enough qualified citizens to fill the local offices. Byberry township in Philadelphia county, for example, had only three legal voters in 1779, and all the local officials were non-residents, although there were eighty-seven adult males assessed for the state and county taxes.⁵

Bearing in mind these facts in regard to the composition of the two parties and the methods adopted by the West to maintain itself in power, let us consider the more important political issues of the time. The religious factor is shown most clearly in the struggle for the control of the College of Philadelphia. That institution, founded in 1749 as an academy and charitable school, had for many years been subject to Episcopalian influence. At the beginning of the war the board of trustees was reorganized, Robert Morris, James Wilson, John Cadwalader and other men of their type being appointed to replace those members who had gone over to the enemy. The board thus became entirely Whiggish in character, although it still continued to be Episcopalian. In addition, nearly every mem-

¹ Statutes at Large, vol. ix, pp. 404-407.

² *The Packet*, February 16, 1779.

³ *Ibid.*, March 11, 1779.

⁴ *The Gazette*, January 26, 1785.

⁵ Westcott History of the Test Laws, pp. xxxviii, xxix; Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, vol. xiv, pp. 575-578, vol. xv, pp. 14-16.

ber was opposed to the constitution of 1776, some of them even refusing to take the oath of allegiance. This condition of affairs naturally gave rise to some complaints, but probably there would have been no serious trouble if Dr. William Smith, the provost of the college, had not, through his fondness for gossip and political controversy, become involved in a personal quarrel with President Reed. It would perhaps be safe to conclude that Reed was the moving spirit in the final attack, although George Bryan led the fight in the Assembly and Dr. John Ewing, the senior pastor of the Presbyterian church in Philadelphia, played a prominent part in organizing the movement on the outside.¹ Reed's motives were chiefly personal, Bryan's were political, and Ewing's were both personal and religious—personal, because he expected to secure the provostship for himself; religious, because he hoped that the result would be a victory for Presbyterianism. A motion for the appointment of a committee to bring in a bill to alter the charter was carried in the Assembly October 2, 1779, by a vote of thirty-three to eighteen. In the affirmative were thirty-one Constitutionalists and two Anti-Constitutionalists, or, as they were now called, Republicans; in the negative, three Constitutionalists and fifteen Republicans. Of the five who voted against the majority of their respective parties, four were Germans, probably Lutherans, and consequently were not much interested in the religious side of the controversy. The final statute, which was passed November 27, abolished the old board of trustees, dropped the title of college, and established the University of Pennsylvania. The new board consisted of three classes of members: first, six representatives of the government *ex officio*; second, the senior ministers in standing of the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Lutheran, German Calvinist, Baptist and Roman Catholic churches in Philadelphia; and third, certain prominent citizens named in the statute itself.²

¹ See the letter by Dr. Rush in *The Freeman's Journal*, February 23, 1785.

² Journals of the House of Representatives, vol. i, pp. 319, 364, 375, 376, 380-385, 392, 395, 396, 402-405; Statutes at Large, vol. x, pp. 23-30; G. B. Wood, Early History of the University of Pennsylvania, Third Edition (1896), pp. 1-93, 203-261.

The general opinion in regard to this legislation was probably that expressed by James Tod in a letter written to Dr. Charles Nisbet of Edinburgh in 1784. "Some time ago," writes Tod, "Dr. Smith and all of the Episcopal people were turned out of the College of Philadelphia and the direction and management put into the hands of Presbyterians."¹ This statement was not strictly true. Nearly one-third of the new board of trustees were Episcopalians, although that denomination constituted a much smaller proportion of the total population of the state. Very few changes were made in the faculty. Two of the five professors in 1785 were Presbyterians, two were Episcopalians, one was a Lutheran. At the same time, however, we must not forget, in that day of small colleges, the enormous influence which the head of an institution could exert over his students. One of the first acts of the new board was to dismiss Dr. Smith from his position as provost and to appoint as his successor one of their own number, Dr. Ewing, who, as we have seen, was the senior minister of the Presbyterian church in the city of Philadelphia. So that, although it was nominally established on a broad and liberal foundation, the university of the new régime was in reality as strongly subjected to Presbyterian influence as the college of the old régime had been to Episcopalian influence. But after all the question was quite as distinctly political as it was religious. The old trustees gave offense, primarily not because they were Episcopalians but because they were the opponents of the constitution of 1776. The new trustees were nearly all Constitutionalists, and a majority of them held public office.

In addition to this affair, party feeling was further intensified by the enforcements of the test acts, by the treason trials, by the Conway cabal, by the dissatisfaction with General Arnold's military administration of Philadelphia, by the Silas Deane controversy and by various other questions of minor importance. At bottom, however, the problem was economic. Taxes were heavy, large numbers of men were drawn from other employ-

¹ *The Packet*, February 9, 1785. Dr. Nisbet subsequently became president of Dickinson college.

ments to serve in the army, and business in general was unsettled through the depreciation of the currency and the operation of the legal-tender laws. Under an ordinance of the constitutional convention of August 1, 1776, and a legislative act of January 29, 1777, the continental bills of credit, the colonial issues of 1764, 1766, 1773 and 1775, and the so-called "resolve money" of 1775-1776 were made full legal-tender for all future debts and, under certain limitations, for debts which had already been contracted. Although the colonial bills were called in by the acts of March 23 and March 25, 1778, the advantage was more than offset by an issue of £200,000 in legal-tender state currency on March 20, 1777.¹ Creditors were compelled to permit the settlement of debts in depreciated money, but they could not be compelled to make further loans while the depreciation was still in progress. Specie was hoarded, tradesmen refused to sell their wares at *ante-bellum* rates, and prices as expressed in paper money rose to fabulous heights. Accepting the popular view that prices were kept up artificially by the Tories in order to discredit the continental currency, the Constitutionalist leaders recommended government regulation. The Republicans, on the other hand, agreed with the merchants and importers in fixing the blame on the legal-tender laws and in urging their repeal. Congress approved of the former plan, in resolutions of February 15 and November 22, 1777, and advised the states to agree upon some uniform principles of action. A regulating act was passed, April 1, 1778, but it met with strong opposition, was suspended May 25, and, in accordance with a new resolution of congress of June 4, was repealed on September 9. Laws were also enacted January 2, 1778, to prevent forestalling; September 7, 1778, to prohibit the exportation of provisions; and November 27, 1778, to prohibit for a limited time the making of spirituous liquors from wheat, rye or other grain.²

¹ Statutes at Large, vol. ix, pp. 8-11, 34-40, 97-103, 225-227, 250-253; Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania, pp. 594, 650, 724.

² Statutes at Large, vol. ix, pp. 177-180, 236-238, 249, 250, 272-274, 283, 284, 297-299; Journals of Congress (Philadelphia, 1800), vol. iii, pp. 50, 417, vol. iv, p. 236.

Serious efforts were made to enforce these legislative panaceas, but they proved to be ineffective. Prices continued to advance, business became more disturbed, and intense suffering prevailed, especially among the middle and lower classes in the city of Philadelphia. The popular feeling that the Tories were responsible for the troubles was strengthened by the acquittal, on April 25, 1779, of David Frank, a prominent non-juror who had been charged with giving information to the enemy in New York.¹ At a town meeting held in the State House yard May 25, under the presidency of General Roberdeau, a committee of thirty-three was selected to regulate prices and to check the depreciation of the paper currency. Colonel William Henry, William Bradford and Doctor James Hutchinson were named as chairmen.² Four days later provision was made for a committee of eleven to seek out all disaffected persons then in Philadelphia or its immediate neighborhood and to report their cases to the committee of thirty-three.³ Similar committees were organized in Lancaster county, June 11, in Chester, June 14, in Philadelphia (county), June 19, and in all of the other counties before the close of the summer. The Wilmington committee, appointed June 2, was based on the Philadelphia model.⁴

During the entire summer of 1779 the government of the state, both central and local, was practically in the hands of these extra-legal organizations. Their methods were arbitrary and tyrannical and their vast powers were freely used for political purposes. The general rule for the regulation of prices laid down by the city committee and adopted by the counties was as follows: the scale for June was to be that of the first of May, for July that of the first of April, for August that of the first of March, *et cetera*, working backward to the original specie basis.⁵

¹ *The Packet*, April 29, 1779.

² *Ibid.*, May 27, 1779; *The Gazette*, May 26, June 2, 1779.

³ *The Packet*, June 5, 1779.

⁴ *Ibid.*, June 12, 15, 22, 24, July 3, 13, 20, 22, September 14, 1779; *The Gazette*, June 16, 23, July 7, 1779; *Diary of Christopher Marshall*, pp. 220, 221, 225-227.

⁵ *The Packet*, June 12, 1779. For the July scale see W. B. Reed, *Life of Joseph Reed*, vol. ii, pp. 144, 145.

The shops and markets of Philadelphia were visited almost daily, and three members of the general committee by rotation sat at the court house every day to hear complaints and to note violations of the rules, to be reported at the next general meeting.¹ One hundred and eighty-two barrels of flour which Robert Morris had purchased in Wilmington were seized by the committee on the pretext that he had paid more than the market price. It was soon discovered that M. Holker, the French consul general in Philadelphia, was a partner in the transaction, and that the flour was really intended for the use of the French fleet. The whole matter was submitted to Congress, and for a time it threatened to produce international complications. President Reed's support of the committee resulted in a conflict between the state and the confederate authorities. The state finally yielded, however, and the cargo was turned over to its owners, very much to the disgust of the committee, and especially of Thomas Paine, who tried to take advantage of the controversy to settle a personal grudge against Morris.²

After a few weeks' trial it became evident that the system was injuring not only the wealthy merchants and importers, whom it was intended to affect, but also the ordinary shopkeepers and mechanics, the mainstay of the Constitutionalist party. The opposition finally became so strong that a formal address was issued by the committee, on September 24, practically admitting the futility of their efforts and providing for their own dissolution.³ Times were harder then than they had been in June. Work was more difficult to obtain, the available food supply was smaller, the continental currency was more depreciated,⁴ and, worst of all, the people had learned to take the law into their

¹ *The Gazette*, June 2, 1779; *The Packet*, June 10, 1779.

² Pennsylvania Archives, First Series (Hazard), vol. vii, pp. 558-561, 580, 599-603, 628-632, 641; Journals of Congress (Philadelphia, 1800), vol. v, p. 232; *The Packet*, May 27, July 8, 24, 31, August 14, 1779; Conway, *Life of Paine*, vol. i, pp. 116-144; Writings of Paine, vol. i, pp. 395-437; Oberholtzer, *Robert Morris*, pp. 52-56.

³ *The Packet*, September 25, 1779.

⁴ The rate was twenty to one in June, twenty-four to one in September, and thirty to one in October. See *Statutes at Large*, vol. x, pp. 286, 287.

own hands. The upper classes were suddenly brought to realize the seriousness of the situation by the famous attack on the house of James Wilson, on October 4, which is known in the histories of that period as the Fort Wilson riot.¹ The Assembly immediately ordered the purchase of one hundred barrels of flour for free distribution, two relief funds were established, and an act of indemnity was passed for those who had taken part in the riot.²

The conditions were now ripe for the development of a conservative reaction. "An American", "Conscience", "Adolphus", "Justus", "A Countryman", "Arator", "Libertas", "A. B.", "A Friend in Time of Need", "A Hint" and others filled the local papers with pleas for the repeal of the tender laws.³ Complaints were also made against the whiskey bill and the laws for preventing forestalling and engrossing.⁴ The measures last mentioned were local in character, but there was a general feeling that the tender laws, inasmuch as they applied in part to the continental currency and had been passed upon the recommendation of Congress, should be repealed or amended only upon the receipt of a subsequent recommendation from the same source.⁵ As a matter of fact such a recommendation was received March 20,⁶ and a motion "for suspending the operation of the law commonly called the tender law, so far as the same relates to the making the continental currency an equal tender with gold and silver in the payment of debts and contracts," was carried on the 21st by a test vote of twenty-eight to twenty-seven. When the actual measure itself, however, was presented, two days later, it was defeated by a majority of thirty to twenty-four. The agitation was kept up, and a com-

¹ Two men were killed and four or five others were wounded. See the contemporary accounts in Reed, *Life of Joseph Reed*, vol. ii, pp. 150-152, 423-428.

² Journals of the House of Representatives, vol. i, p. 387; Statutes at Large, vol. x, pp. 117-119; *The Packet*, October 12, 16, 1779.

³ *The Packet*, February 17, 19, 24, 29, March 4, 7, 11, 14, 1780; *The Journal*, January 26, February 23, 1780; *The Gazette*, December 22, 1779, March 8, 1780.

⁴ Journals of the House of Representatives, vol. i, pp. 379, 414, 434.

⁵ See T. P. in *The Packet*, February 8, 1780.

⁶ Journals of Congress (Philadelphia, 1800), vol. vi, pp. 33, 34.

promise was finally reached, based upon the advice of Congress. The continental tender laws were suspended until the end of the next session of the General Assembly, and provision was made for the issue of \$1,250,000 in five per cent bills to fund \$25,000,000 of continental currency. The suspending act was further continued by enactments of September 22 and December 22, 1780, until June 21, 1781, when all the legal-tender laws were repealed.¹ The greater part of this legislation applied only to the continental currency. The £200,000 of resolve money and the £200,000 issued by the state, March 20, 1777, retained their legal-tender quality continuously until February 20, 1781.² The £100,000 issue of March 25, 1780, and the £500,000 issue of April 7, 1781, were legal tender until the passage of the act of June 21, 1781.³

The gradual growth of the conservative reaction can be followed not only in the history of legislation but also in the election returns. For a time the question of revising the constitution ceased to be an active issue. James Wilson could truthfully say in 1780: "No endeavours have been lately made to change the constitution; nothing of that kind, that I know of, is now intended."⁴ The fact of the matter is that the public were tiring of the old disputes over the constitution and were beginning to take a more active interest in financial and economic problems. There was also a general feeling that the question of revision could safely be postponed until the election of the Council of Censors in 1783. Although the Republicans had only three representatives in the Assembly of 1779-1780, they succeeded in 1780 in carrying the city and county of Philadelphia and in gaining a few seats even in the frontier counties. Party lines were apparently not very strictly

¹ Journals of the House of Representatives, vol. i, pp. 450-453, 498, 500, 501; Statutes at Large, vol. x, pp. 204-214, 228, 229, 247-249, 337-344. The suspending act was passed May 31, the funding act, June 1.

² Statutes at Large, vol. x, pp. 265, 266.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 183-190, 249-251, 301-308, 337-344; H(enry) P(hillips), Jr., An Historical Sketch of the Paper Money Issued by Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, 1862), pp. 24, 25, 39.

⁴ *The Journal*, October 18, 1780.

drawn, however, inasmuch as Frederick A. Mühlenberg, a Republican, was unanimously chosen speaker, while General Reed, who was by this time a most pronounced Constitutionalist, was re-elected president of the Supreme Executive Council with only one dissenting vote.¹ In the election of 1781 at least thirty-four Constitutionlists and twenty-six Republicans were returned. Owing to the fact that they were absent during the greater part of the session, it is impossible to ascertain the politics of the remaining twelve members. Their inclusion would probably increase slightly the Constitutionalist majority.² As the election of October 8, 1782, drew near the Republican leaders became hopeful of carrying the state. John Dickinson was requested to make the race for the Supreme Executive Council in Philadelphia county, with the tacit understanding that he would be elected president in case their party were able to control the Assembly. It seemed to make very little difference that Dickinson had not been a resident of the state for five years, that he was at that time president of Delaware, with two more years to serve, or that he had protested, when he began to sulk in 1777, that "he never would accept any office, either civil or military, honorable or profitable, in the state, whilst the present constitution had existence."³ The campaign almost immediately narrowed down to a personal contest between Reed and Dickinson. Although Reed was not himself a candidate for the Executive Council, having already served the three years permitted by the constitution, he was the recognized leader of his party, and his administration as president was constantly under fire. For several weeks both men were reviled unmercifully by the newspaper politicians. It was the publication in *The Independent Gazetteer*,⁴ over the signature of "Brutus," of a virulent attack upon Reed's war record which

¹ Journals of the House of Representatives, vol. i, pp. 527, 533, 534; Colonial Records, vol. xii, pp. 540, 541.

² Minutes of the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth General Assemblies, pp. 500, 501, 621, 622; Colonial Records, vol. xiii, p. 112.

³ Stillé, *Life of Dickinson*, pp. 209, 222; "An Independent Whig" in *The Journal*, November 6, 1782.

⁴ September 7, 1782.

precipitated the famous Reed-Cadwalader controversy. The conservative reaction had progressed so rapidly that the Republicans elected their entire ticket in both the city and the county of Philadelphia and made large gains throughout the rest of the state. The first test of party strength was over the choice of a speaker, October 31. The Constitutionalists united upon Reed's brother-in-law, Joseph Montgomery of Lancaster, while Mühlenberg was put forward by the Republicans. Mühlenberg was elected by a majority of four.¹ The joint meeting of the Council and Assembly, held on November 7 for the election of a president and a vice-president, resulted as follows: for president, Dickinson forty-one, General James Potter thirty-two; for vice-president, James Ewing thirty-nine, General Potter thirty-four.²

With this election the revolutionary political history of Pennsylvania may fittingly be brought to a close. During the latter part of the colonial period two well-defined political parties were developed: the Proprietary, which represented the Episcopalians and the Scotch-Irish, and the Anti-Proprietary, which represented the Quakers and the Germans. Each was controlled by its more conservative element. In the course of the struggle with the mother country these parties were reconstructed, roughly speaking, along the lines of social and economic cleavage; which is only another way of saying that they became more distinctly sectional in character, because the social and economic differences were themselves determined primarily by geographical influences. The war was not the fundamental cause of this reconstruction. If conditions had been entirely normal, the possession of common social and economic interests would in time have led to the formation of alliances between the Scotch-Irish and the Germans and between the Quakers and the Episcopalians. The war did, however, furnish the immediate occasion for the reconstruction, and for many years it seriously affected the development of the process. The natural tendency

¹ Minutes of the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth General Assemblies, pp. 715-717; *The Journal*, December 4, 1782.

² Colonial Records, vol. xiii, p. 413.

of the Revolution was to stimulate the spirit of rebellion. It was just as logical for the frontier democracy to rebel against the old aristocratic colonial régime as it was for the Americans in general to rebel against the imperial régime. The Quakers and the Episcopalians were agreed in opposing the Declaration of Independence and the formation of a state government; but when those measures were forced upon them, mainly through pressure brought to bear by the other colonies, they lost their unanimity, the Quakers in general becoming Tories or neutrals, while the Episcopalians divided about evenly between the Whigs and the Tories. Through these dissensions, the radicals or Constitutionals secured possession of the government in 1776 and retained it throughout the war. The mechanics in the city of Philadelphia were enfranchised and the Tories and neutrals were disfranchised; the constitution was made as democratic as possible and care was taken to prevent the adoption of amendments; the West received, and retained until 1779, a representation in the Executive Council and also in the Assembly which was out of all proportion to its numerical strength.

The lack of success in dealing with the financial and economic problems of the war, however, soon brought the Constitutionals into disrepute. The burden of taxation was thrown almost entirely upon the East; business was unsettled by the enactment of legal-tender laws, embargo laws and laws to regulate prices; the College of Philadelphia was deprived of its charter in order to stimulate political activity among the Presbyterians and to satisfy a private grudge of Joseph Reed; mob violence was condoned, if not openly encouraged; and no attempt was made to restrain the baiting of Tories and neutrals. The Fort Wilson riot of October 4, 1779, marks the culmination of the radical policy and the beginning of a reaction. Although the Constitutionals were still in power, continental currency was deprived of its legal-tender quality in 1780 and all of the legal-tender laws were repealed in 1781. The Anti-Constitutionals or Republicans gained steadily in the elections of 1780 and 1781, and they would undoubtedly have carried the state in the latter year if the result had been determined purely by local considerations. The majority of voters, however, were

afraid to trust them entirely until it was known for certain that Cornwallis's surrender meant the end of hostilities. During the next few years the two parties contended on fairly equal terms. The Republicans were usually successful whenever the financial issue was emphasized, the Constitutionalists whenever it was possible to revive the prejudices of the war. By taking advantage of the general conservative movement which swept over practically all the states in 1786, the Republicans were able first to revise (1786) and then to repeal (1789) the test acts, to secure the ratification of the federal constitution and, finally, to draft a new constitution for the state itself (1790). As national political parties developed, the Constitutionalists became Jeffersonian Republicans and the Republicans became Federalists. Several years elapsed before the former were entirely reconciled to the new conditions. The Whiskey Rebellion of 1794 and the Fries Rebellion of 1799 represented respectively the last efforts of the Scotch-Irish and the Germans to revive the old war-time methods. The natural growth of population in the West, however, in time restored the peaceful supremacy of the radicals, and the party of Jefferson and Jackson retained almost uninterrupted control of the state until 1860.

W. ROY SMITH.

BRYN MAWR COLLEGE.